



**MELLERS PRIMARY SCHOOL
LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN POLICY
September 2016**

Mellers Looked After Children Policy

Name of Designated teacher: Sarah Elliott

Name of Governor with responsibility for looked after children: Mark Gilmore

Mellers recognises that all pupils are entitled to a balanced, broad-based curriculum and aims to promote the educational achievement and welfare of pupils in public care. The school and the governing body endorses Nottingham City Council policy and welcomes looked after children who may be looked after by our local authority or those who may be in the care of another authority but living in Nottingham City.

This policy includes requirements set out in statutory guidance on the duty on local authorities to promote the educational achievement of looked after children under 22(3A) of the Children Act 1989 and associated guidance on the education of looked after children.

Mellers approach to encouraging and supporting the educational achievement of looked after children is based on the following principles:

- Prioritising education set within an inclusive context which makes reasonable adjustments to ensure a personalised curriculum where necessary and appropriate;
- Listening to the looked after child;
- Working closely with home, voluntary and statutory agencies;
- Promoting attendance, through a programme of early intervention, priority action, reducing exclusions and promoting stability within a positive learning environment;
- Identifying need, including social and emotional as well as learning needs or gifted and talented skills and abilities;
- Targeting support, including accessing resources from other agencies as well as provision from school resources;
- Having high expectations.

Rationale

Many children and young people who are in care have suffered abuse or neglect. Despite having as broad a range of abilities as their peers, looked after children are particularly vulnerable to underachievement. Barriers to their progress include a high level of disruption and change in school placements, lack of motivation or involvement in extra-curricular activities.

Mellers believes that the educational experience of all children should be positive and powerful and aims to provide an inclusive learning environment in which every looked after child can be successful. We believe that we have a major part to play in ensuring that looked after children are safe, reach their full potential and are prepared for life transitions.

Admission arrangements

The school recognises that due to care arrangements looked after children may enter school mid-term and that it is important that they are given a positive welcome and where appropriate additional support and pre-entry visits to help them settle.

The school recognises that looked after children are an 'excepted group' and will prioritise looked after children in the school's oversubscription criteria following the Department for Education's School Admissions Code (December 2014). Looked after children will be admitted following the new pupil protocol (see appendix 1) and new arrivals policy (see appendix 2 to *be approved by governors*). In addition, they will be allocated a key worker who will support them and advocate on their behalf.

Support and resources

The Governing body will ensure that the school allocates resources, including professional time and expertise, to support appropriate provision for looked after children, meeting the objectives set out in this policy.

Role and Responsibilities of the Designated Teacher

The duties of the Designated Teacher will include:

- Ensuring that looked after children are welcomed into the school; necessary meetings are held and arrangements are put in place to ensure their needs identified and met. This may include providing basic equipment and resources if necessary and providing appropriate support in meeting uniform requirements if needed;
- Maintaining an up-to-date record of the looked after children in school, including those in the care of other authorities and ensuring all necessary information is passed to other staff as required;
- Monitoring and tracking progress of looked after children in school and intervening if there is evidence of individual underachievement;
- Holding a supervisory brief for all children being looked after and acting as advocate for the looked after children in school;
- Liaising with teaching and non-teaching staff in school, including the Designated Safeguarding Lead to ensure they are aware of the difficulties and educational disadvantage looked after children may face;
- Establishing and maintaining regular contact with home, statutory and voluntary agencies;
- Ensuring PEP review meetings are held regularly and information passed to all those concerned, including the local authority;
- Attending training as required to keep fully informed of latest developments and policies regarding looked after children.

Record keeping and information sharing

The Designated Teacher will keep an up-to-date record of looked after children and young people in school and will ensure that relevant information is made known to appropriate staff.

A Personal Education Plan (PEP) will be initiated within 20 school days of the looked after child or young person starting at the school or being taken into care and will be reviewed regularly and as necessary and appropriate to meet the needs of the looked after child. The PEP will provide a regular opportunity to review progress, note any concerns and ensure all relevant parties are informed accordingly.

Copies of reports and appropriate documentation will be sent to authorised carers and agencies involved with the child as well as any receiving school at point of transition.

It is vital that the looked after child or young person is aware of information being recorded, in what circumstances and who will have access to it. How this is shared with them will depend on their age and level of understanding.

Exclusions

Mellers recognises that looked after children are particularly vulnerable to exclusions.

Where a looked after child is at risk of exclusion the school will try every practicable means to maintain the child in school. A multi-professional meeting will be arranged, bringing together all those involved with the young person to discuss strategies to minimise the risk of exclusion.

The child or young person's personal education plan will reflect strategies to support the child and where relevant those employed in other educational support plans.

All relevant measures and resources will be considered to provide support and perhaps alternative educational packages to prevent an exclusion from happening. Where it is necessary for an exclusion to take place, a re-integration plan will be prepared for the child to facilitate their transition back into school.

Staff development and training

Arrangements will be made to ensure that the Designated Teacher is kept up to date with developments relating to the education and attainment of looked after children.

Other staff will receive relevant training and support to enable them to work sympathetically and productively with looked after children, including those who are underachieving or at risk of underachieving or who have additional needs.

Home-school liaison

The school recognises the value of a close working relationship between home and school and will work towards developing a strong partnership with parents/carers and care workers to enable looked after children to achieve their potential.

Structured conversations as well as PEP meetings provide opportunities to continue to develop this partnership working.

Links with other agencies

The school recognises the value of working together with other agencies and organisations and will work closely with colleagues from services involved with the looked after child or young person.

APPENDIX 1

Mellers Primary School Admission Protocol for New Pupils		
1	Letter with details of new pupil is emailed to Admin mailbox from Admissions and Exclusions	Admin staff to forward this to relevant class teacher and to Inclusion leader
2	Parent of new pupil should contact school to arrange admission meeting.	Admin staff to inform teacher of the date and time of this meeting Class teacher to organise resources (tray, books etc) If new to English, class teacher and children learn basic phrases in child's language (use Newbury Park resource) Ensure beginners to English resources are ready
3	Is the child confident at English speaking?	If 'Yes' the child can start in class directly after the admission meeting If 'No' Explain to parent that the child can stay for an hour that day and then start full time the following day
4	Admission meeting takes place	Introduction to Head Teacher and class teacher
5	New pupil is taken to class	If new to English, pupil is assigned a language buddy to support in class and at playtime At home time, let families know about PE, swimming days etc
6	Is the child new to English?	Inclusion leader to meet new beginner and timetable support Pupil will be assessed by inclusion leader during first two – three weeks
7	Does the pupil need additional support?	Assign support/interventions as necessary e.g. learning mentor, TA support, nurture time etc

APPENDIX 2

Child Friendly New Arrivals Policy

Mellers is a happy and friendly school where everyone is valued and made welcome. We're really glad that you have come to join us. It may seem a little strange at first being in a new school but everyone is here to help you so try not to worry.

This is what you can expect when you join us at Mellers:

Before you arrive:

- Your parents will fill in a form to tell the school all about you
- Your new teacher and class will be told that you will be coming to join us
- Your teacher will make sure everything is ready for you and if you speak another language, the class will learn a few words to make you feel welcome!
- You will visit school with your parents to have a chat. If you feel confident, you can stay with us for an hour (or longer) just to meet everyone and see where everything is.

Your first full day:

- If you are new to English, you will be given a language buddy who will really help you in your first few weeks
- We will let you know about PE, swimming days, music and any important dates; there is a visual timetable in every class.
- We will show you around our lovely school

Your first few weeks:

- If you are new to English, your language buddy will support you when you need it
- Sometimes you might work with a teacher by yourself or in a small group
- If you feel lonely or scared, there are playground buddies to help and play with you. You can spot them wearing bright yellow vests at playtimes.

Don't worry. We are happy you are here. You will love being at Mellers. We promise that we will:

- Always listen to you
- Make sure you feel happy
- Play with you
- Support you



Approved by the Joint Committee:

To be reviewed:

